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BROADWAY



- 4 UR Here**
Letting the river decide
- 5 St. Paddy's**
Going green (the Irish edition)
- 6 Prairie Pop**
UI and Mission Creek's aural matrimony
- 8 Mixtape Mastery**
Where it's at: one man's hip hop history PLUS download a local full-length mixtape for free.
- 10 On the Tube**
Tack to the future
- 11 On the Air**
Democracy lives, online as well as on air.
- 12 At the Bar**
A Knight bearing tapes. Sweet, precious tapes.
- 14 Talking Movies**
An Amoldovar for us all
- 15 Literature**
Mission Creek continues its literary leanings.
- 16 Album Reviews**
You send 'em, we review 'em.
- 22 News Quirks**
The giggles will get ya.
- 23 Astrology**
Remember, keep looking up!

ON THE COVER

Clockwise from top left: Sarah Cram, the Diplomettes; Dustin Busch; Andre Perry, Mission Creek co-producer; Connor Wyrick, Beast Wars; Sam Locke Ward; Chris Wiersema, Lwa; Josh Carrollhach, Liberty Leg.

No, they didn't actually form an all-star band. But, these local musicians, and others, have been gathered by Mission Creek founder Andre Perry—along with his fellow organizers, Craig Eley, Tanner Illingworth and Todd Olmstead—to perform at the 2010 Mission Creek Festival.

For a comprehensive list of events and venues (as of March 1), consult the Mission Creek Festival program—inserted within these pages. For other news and updates, including potential additions or schedule changes, visit MissionFreak.com.

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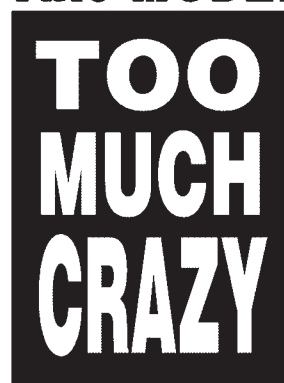
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THIS MODERN WORLD



1. SPEAKERS AT RIGHT-WING CONFERENCE READ TELEPROMPTER JOKES... OFF THE TELEPROMPTER.

HA HA I SEE WE HAVE OUR OBAMA COMMEMORATIVE TELEPROMPTER HERE TONIGHT!



by TOM TOMORROW

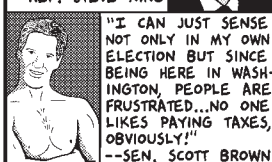
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3. REPUBLICAN LAWMAKERS EXPRESS GUARDED SYMPATHY FOR GUY WHO FLEW PLANE INTO I.R.S. BUILDING.

"IT'S SAD THE INCIDENT IN TEXAS HAPPENED, BUT... (WHEN) WE ABOLISH THE I.R.S., IT'S GOING TO BE A HAPPY DAY FOR AMERICA!" --REP. STEVE KING



4. INFAMOUS ACORN TAPES TURN OUT TO HAVE BEEN MISLEADINGLY EDITED; MAINSTREAM MEDIA INEXPLICABLY RELUCTANT TO ISSUE CORRECTIONS.

"THE STORY SAYS O'KEEFE DRESSED UP AS A PIMP AND TRAINED HIS HIDDEN CAMERA ON ACORN COUNSELLORS. IT DOES NOT SAY HE DID THOSE TWO THINGS AT THE SAME TIME."



5. CLIMATE CHANGE DENIALISTS CAN'T GET OVER THE FACT THAT IT STILL SNOWS IN THE WINTER.

WHERE IS THE YEAR-ROUND TROPICAL PARADISE IMPLIED BY THE PHRASE "GLOBAL WARMING"?



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Boundary Waters

Eastern Iowans are nervously watching the snow pile up in their yards and fields this winter. While we have not threatened any records, the memory of 2008 lingers like the shadow pain of a broken bone recently healed. Indeed, the news outlets are running stories that tell us forecasters are worried about flooding—again—this coming spring.

No one would have ever asked for the devastation of 2008. But if there were any microbe of a silver lining in that monstrous storm cloud that was the flood, it was that people in our community started paying more attention to how we should live with the river—and not just by building ramparts against it, but by building human life in concert with it.

One thing that still has *not* resulted from greater river awareness is a reorientation of our minds to natural—and as a result cultural—boundaries and relationships. During June of 2008, I heard innumerable people—in the media (both national and local) and in private conversation—look to the unfolding inundation in Cedar Rapids and claim that that’s what was heading toward Iowa City. In the vaguest, most general sense, this was true. Floodwaters from the north were heading to the south toward Iowa City. But they were not the floodwaters from Cedar Rapids. It seems ridiculous to have to say it, but many people seem not to understand that the Cedar River runs through Cedar Rapids, and the Iowa River runs through Iowa City.

In fact, many still haven’t figured this out. A recent local newspaper article about local flooding concerns said, “Along with the snow, including as much as 12 to 16 inches already on the ground in the Waterloo area of the Iowa River, river levels are higher than normal for this year in many parts of the state.” Waterloo is the northernmost satellite on I-380—and of course is nowhere near the Iowa River, which is 50 miles to its west in Iowa Falls. Yes, it’s the *Cedar* River that flows through Waterloo.

What this confusion belies, I believe, is an imbalance between cultural and natural relationships. It’s not surprising that Iowa City and Cedar Rapids have societal relationships, as they are large cities (for Iowa) not far from

each other. Cedar Rapids is north; Iowa City is south. So I suppose that’s why people sometimes think that everything that travels south from the north—like river water—flows between the City of Five Seasons and the Athens of

People sometimes think that everything that travels south from the north—like river water—flows between the City of Five Seasons and the Athens of the Midwest. Unfortunately, this is pure ignorance.

the Midwest. Unfortunately, this is pure ignorance—and I mean that in the literal sense of being unaware or lacking knowledge.

Bioregionalism is a way of thought and way of living that urges us to orient our conceptions of place and our human activity more toward natural boundaries, as opposed to the arbitrary and artificial boundaries of political designations (cities, towns, counties, states, etc). When we align our lives with respect to the natural flows, processes, and ecologies of the *real* “real world,” the bioregionalists say, we will organically become better environmental stewards. But bioregionalists also urge a more wholistic approach—to orient our cultural activities and practices (our commerce, our art, our education) to these patterns and places that nature has created, as opposed to

imposing capricious designs on the landscape, often at cross-purposes with nature.

One of our most potent geographic tropes ‘round these parts is “the Corridor.” I’m not denying that it’s great that culture and commerce flow between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City, as well they should. But it’s healthy to look at the negative aspects of our conceptions, too. The core of the “Corridor” is an interstate highway. Aside from the entirely depressing idea of identifying one’s home by a ribbon of concrete, we cannot ignore the problems that interstates bring along with their advantages, pollution and sprawl at the top of the list. Another little-discussed problem is that the “corridor” phenomenon—which happens elsewhere—is actually a factor in rural economic decline. As geographers like David Harvey and Doreen Massey say, communities today compete for finite global capital, which tends to come to rest in areas like the “Corridor.” The dark side is that other places, like small towns and rural areas, are left with little to nothing except decline.

Even though admirable initiatives like the Iowa Cultural Corridor Alliance hitch their wagons to the concept, the “Corridor” idea in its origin is squarely about placing our faith, our social structure, our destiny, our conception of self and society in commerce and technology. The “Corridor” certainly has absolutely nothing to do with our relationship with the natural world and environmental stewardship—which, according to most definitions of “place” these days, is in fact the foundation of our life in place.

One of the most common “boundary” principles in bioregionalism is the watershed. The EPA on their website defines a watershed as “the area of land where all of the water that is under it or drains off of it goes into the same place.” Even the EPA understands the *cultural* importance of the watershed, though, as they also quote the 19th-century geologist and explorer John Wesley Powell, who said that a watershed is “that area of land, a bounded hydrologic system, within which all living things are inextricably linked by their common water course and where, as humans settled, simple logic demanded that they become part of a community.”

RIVERS CONTINUED ON PAGE 7 >>

when IRISH EYES ARE SMILING

I don't have a lot of good memories of celebrating St. Patrick's Day.

I don't have a lot of bad ones either. I just don't have too many memories of it at all as the handful of times I've actually made an effort to go out and celebrate it's almost always involved entirely too much drinking.

Even if I weren't wearing green like a lot of other celebrants were I usually had a green color about me by the end of the day.

How a holiday celebrating the remembrance a pious former slave who became a missionary and returned to the land he was once held captive has metamorphosized into an all-day bac-

row some flour for my mother if she were baking and had run out.

All of these folks had razor-sharp wits, were great storytellers and were always quick with a joke and a hearty hello on the street. They were always happy to offer you help if you needed and unafraid to ask for help when they did.

I couldn't have possibly had better neighbors growing up and I don't remember any of them being heavy drinkers.

If drinking to excess were truly an inherently "Irish" trait

If drinking to excess were truly an inherently "Irish" trait than one might think that Iowa City—not Ireland—was the true ancestral homeland of the Irish.

chanal is a mystery to me.

I grew up among the Irish—and that's not just a figure of speech—and getting drunk was never a big part of their lives.

Tobin, Cullen, Murphy, Fitzgerald, Boyd, McKenna, Kelly, Connolly, Donnelly O'Malley, O'Shaughnessy, O'Toole—those were just some of the Irish families on my block when I was growing up.

It was into these families' homes I went to for weddings, funerals, graduations, confirmations, anniversaries or sometimes just to bor-

than one might think that Iowa City—not Ireland—was the true ancestral homeland of the Irish people.

Don't get me wrong—I'm not by any stretch of the imagination an opponent of drunken debauchery—but let's just call how we celebrate the holiday what it is: tailgating in anticipation of spring's big debut.

St. Patrick's Day—when there's a parade anyway—is normally the first time people

will gather outside in large numbers in dubious weather without there needing to be a sport occurring somewhere in the vicinity to justify it. And nobody will give you a funny look for drinking in public at 10 in the morning at a St. Patrick's Day parade. Try doing this at a Christmas day parade sometime and you'll end up in the drunk tank being a stocking stuffer for somebody bigger than you are.

How, then, is how we celebrate St. Patrick's Day really any different from tailgating? It's not.

Just as legend holds that St. Patrick is believed to have driven the snakes out of Ireland, St. Patrick's Day is when we all gather—Irish or not—and lift green beers to drive winter out of our lives.

That we're doing it under the guise of a holiday that celebrates the life of a saint—and Irish culture in general—is just fine by me. The Irish are a wonderful people who

more than deserve a day of recognition for all they've brought to this country, but getting wasted-drunk in the process doesn't make one any more "Irish" than eating a few cans of

ST. PADDY CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 >>



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MUSICAL BREW

With some musicians and bands, I form a kind of matrimonial bond (though because I like so many artists, that makes me a bit of a polygamist). Long-term fandom is like entering into a marital contract—where you're with them until the bitter end, even if they get a little ugly or annoying. Even when that artist releases yet another mediocre album, a true fan can at least find a couple songs to love, or at least like.

R.E.M., for me, is the archetypal example of this. The first live concert I ever went to was the group's *Life's Rich Pageant* tour in the mid-1980s, and I never stopped buying their albums, even when I knew better. (Last year, it didn't go so well when I awkwardly explained my musical marriage theory to R.E.M. bassist Mike Mills during an event we were both a part of. He looked at me with a pained smile while I more or less said to him, "Yeah, even when you kind of started sucking, I was there for you.")

Rarely do bands emerge from the other end of a string of lackluster albums with something worth hearing. The Meat Puppets, another alum of the '80s pop underground, managed that coup last year on their twelfth album, *Sewn Together*. Better yet, they surfaced from a long absence from the music scene—and in the case of one member, an extended drug addiction—as a band resurrected. When I saw the Meat Puppets in the 1980s, I remember



RARELY DO BANDS EMERGE FROM THE OTHER END OF A STRING OF LACKLUSTER ALBUMS WITH SOMETHING WORTH HEARING.

being awed by guitarist Curt Kirkwood and bassist Cris Kirkwood's improvisatory playfulness and technical skillz (and this is coming from someone who finds virtuosity-for-virtuosity's sake tiresome). Even though the Meat Puppets began in the early 1980s playing fast, short punk songs, the group rapidly evolved into something quite different, and unique. Their instrumental prowess set them apart from others in the American post-punk scene, and their off-kilter, dissonant harmonies truly made them one of a kind. Imagine ZZ Top's southwestern stomp 'n' romp combined with the interlocking spider-webbed lead guitar leads of Jerry Garcia, the rough-

Mission Creek-University of Iowa Partnerships

PUBLIC ENEMY PANEL

Thursday April 1,
Englert Theater, 7pm

Public Enemy panel celebrating the 20th anniversary of the hip hop group's groundbreaking album, *Fear of a Black Planet*—featuring Public Enemy frontman Chuck D, Hip-Hop Activist & Media Assassin Harry Allen, and PE co-founders Hank Shocklee and Keith Shocklee (members of the group's original production unit, the Bomb Squad). Moderated by Kembrew McLeod. Free and open to the public.

BOMB SQUAD

Thursday April 1
Yacht Club, 9pm

Bomb Squad, The Hood Internet, Database, School of Flyentology perform. Part of the Mission Creek Festival.

DUB REGGAE TALK

Friday, April 2,
International Commons, University Capitol Center, room 1117, 4pm

Yale Ethnomusicologist Michael Veal will give a talk on dub reggae, titled "The Acoustics of Diaspora," as part of the International Programs lecture series "Taping the World."

TWO TURNTABLES AND A MICROPHONE

March 27-June 27, Iowa Memorial Union, Black Box Theater

UI Museum of Art exhibit on hip hop: "Two Turntables and a Microphone—Hip-hop Contexts featuring Harry Allen's Part of the Permanent Record: Photos from the Previous Century." Deborah Whaley and Kembrew McLeod, co-curators. Free and open to the public.

hewn country vocals of the Louvin Brothers, the stop-on-a-dime dynamics of their SST labelmates the Minutemen, and the punk irreverence early Black Flag (also signed to SST Records).

However, in the 1990s, after a fluke MTV hit, "Backwater," the Meat Puppets' arena ambitions muted the elements that made them so unique. Last year at the Mill they redeemed themselves by playing one of the most shit-hot-tastic shows I've seen in many moons (I should also give props to Samuel Locke Ward's opening performance, which perfectly

set the tone). On Friday, April 2, they return to the Mill, with Ward as the opener, as part of the Mission Creek Festival. Unlike most bands that I've stayed married to—through years of diminishing returns—this is one musical relationship that finally paid off in the end. **lv**

Kembrew McLeod lives and teaches in Iowa City. He is spending the winter days learning all the various different "ass" dances described throughout the decades in popular song. After that, he can truly say that he is putting the ass back into his job title, associate professor.

KEMBREW'S TOP MISSION CREEK PICKS

ACID MOTHERS TEMPLE: With single songs that often break the one-hour mark, this ridiculously prolific Japanese experimental psych-rock band bridges the gap between drone-y minimalism—they've covered Terry Riley's composition In C, for instance—and sludgy rock madness. Not to be missed, on or off drugs.

BOMB SQUAD: In their first incarnation the Bomb Squad was Public Enemy's legendary production unit, responsible for such masterpieces as It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back and Fear of a Black Planet. In the late 2000s, brothers Hank Shocklee and Keith Shocklee returned as a live musical unit cranking out dubby, skittering electronica that is all high and low frequencies.

CAMERA OBSCURA: Kickin' it wispy style, this Scottish group takes twee-ness to the next level with beautifully catchy songs that continue to ring long after the pause button is pushed.

CAVE SINGERS: Bare-boned and tuneful acoustic songs that descend from a folk music tradition that critic Greil Marcus dubbed "old weird America."

GRANT HART: The drummer and co-songwriter in Hüsker Dü, yet another great trio signed to SST in the 1980s, Grant Hart recently returned with Hot Wax, his first solo album in a decade. Overshadowed by his former bandmate Bob Mould, Hart's talents are criminally underrated.

POCAHAUNTED: Expansive and—yes—haunting psychedelia for the lo-fi crowd, last year's Island Diamonds was a below-the-radar classic.

Check the Mission Creek Festival program for times and a full listing of shows.


>> RIVERS FROM PAGE 4

So where are we in Iowa City in terms of "watershed?" Of course, on a grand scale we are part of the Mississippi watershed, as is the Cedar River valley (and the Cedar and Iowa rivers meet at Columbus Junction before flowing into the Mississippi). But if "community" begins on a smaller scale, which I think it does, we have to look up and downstream of the Iowa River. On the smallest level, Iowa City/Coralville is located basically where the "Middle Iowa" and "Lower Iowa" watersheds, as defined by the EPA, meet. So if we were to reorient our lives more along bioregional lines, we would need to turn our attention and relationship-building more toward Columbus Junction, Lone Tree, Riverside, the Amanas, Belle Plaine, Marengo, Tama, Marshalltown.

I'm not saying that we should—or even can—turn our backs on our relationship with Cedar Rapids or that we have no relationship now with these Iowa River communities. But what would happen if we took the bioregionalists' advice and started defining ourselves at least as much in terms of our connections with those who share our natural lifeflow? What would happen if we put the Stream, the Current, the Valley on the same footing (or higher) as the Corridor? What new stories would we tell about ourselves and each other? What new cultural relationships would we build with our "natural" neighbors? What new economic vibrancies might be sparked from this concourse? What reimaginings of who and what we are might renew our lives in this place?

I'd certainly like to find out. **lv**

Thomas Dean is actually afraid of rivers in a lot of ways, and he's writing an essay about it.



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Where they were from was just as important as what they were saying, almost from the beginning. To be down was to be *in the house*. Location in Iowa City was and is the same—while rappers can and will rap anywhere, and come and go, it is the places that get Master-locked into memory, chain-linking Iowa City and hip hop inextricably. Time and place bind up together. People are attached to where they were when others heard them play, heard them rap, not to where they disappeared to. Here's a little story that must be told.

It is 1995 and the Tallboy and I are nuts about hip hop. We learn quickly that rappers will rap anywhere. These kids Scott, Dalton, Ronell and Dave would get loose in the back of the Tallboy's Toyota minivan, a hilariously ugly shitbox on wheels that we called the Toastervan. We were 18 or 19, and we'd run from party to party, with two or three kids in bubble-gosoes in the far back, trading rhymes and long exhalations of hot smoke, one beatboxing when the other was spitting. It was the first time I'd ever heard cats rhyme up close and personal, first time I heard, "Yeah/my n**ga Dave on the beat/BJ and Clarence in the front seat." I got chills, knowing instinctively what *off the top of the dome* meant. Me and the Tallboy would trade a stunned look when we got out of the van, half-ripped and half-amazed: *people could really make up verses as they went along?!!* We listened to a lot of rap in the Toaster: Funkmaster Flex mixtapes, Nas albums, some G-funk, unreleased Dogg Pound albums we copped off Daz's girlfriend's brother. But none of it matched the intensity of freestyle sessions on wheels, fellas trading jabs live and direct. You couldn't help but be addicted after that. In that same van we first heard Tack Fu's debut tape, *The Supplement*. Ronell rapped on it under the name Panic. The van drove us to shows, drove us to apartments. The Tallboy drove me to the old KRUI studio for my first chance to play beats on the radio.

The old studio was across from where the law school is now. I went to appear on a rap show hosted by this goofy kid we knew. His knowledge about hip hop seemed encyclopedic. His on-air name was The Big O. I played some beats, and for the part where I was supposed to talk, I made it about two sentences in

before he cut my mic—I had jokingly referred to the little studio with two dorky kids in it talking rap as "The Cracker Barrel," and after that it was a while before I'd be talking about it on the radio again. The Big O was a forgiving mensch, though. The night *Aquemini* dropped, he had the Tallboy and me up to the BJ Records backroom to listen to the album again after the midnight sale, talking beats and regionalism, marveling at "Spottieottiedopealicious" through a cloud of Garcia y Vega. BJ Records was a second-story goldmine, in its final incarnation, right above the Deadwood. Hasn't been there for years.

When we weren't in the van or the record store or stu-

production super-group—I had a track on that album, my first real release. Now rappers drop albums pretty regularly here. Now Tack makes a PATV show, laces somebody with a beat sometimes. Now members of Bad Fathers are somewhere in LA and somewhere in Iowa, after changing their names, getting a live band, dropping a few releases.

Plenty of rappers from the Bad Fathers/85 dB Monk renaissance are still in town, though; the Big O went on to spit in the group Psychosomatic. Animosity bounced from solo act to collaborations with lots of different groups, eventually landing a plum spot holding down mic duties for funk-hippies the Uniphonics. 'Mos used to rap with this group I made beats for, which had about seven names in sequence, the longest-lasting being Hellenistic. It was David the Saint (now solo as well as performing with A.V. Collective), johndope (formerly in Dopesicc with Johnny Six) and this kid Tim. Their lineup rotated now and then, drama being what it always is with rappers. One day they showed up to my home, drunk, in the middle of the afternoon, unannounced, while I was in the middle of something important. I answered the door in an unbuttoned dress

shirt and boxers. They stared at me, the smell of Five-Star wafting across the doorjamb, and Animosity blurted out the question on everyone's mind: "Oh, are you crushing it?" Location became a lesson: never let a rapper know where you live—especially if you were trying to have sex in peace.

It was okay to let producers know where

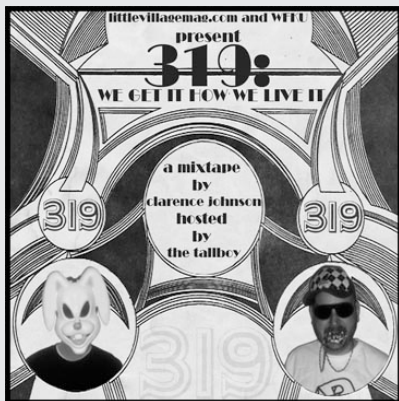
Hip hop in Iowa City is not just now, but has been all along.

you live—they were generally a little more low-key. We used to have regular production meetings, hosted by Helen in her Hawkeye Court hotbox. She just loved the music, wanted to see it grow in Iowa City. It was me, Vince (who still does Noise Radio on KRUI), Tack, Chaircrusher, DJ Earl-e, his frequently collaborator Prose. It eventually moved to Vince's house near Southeast Junior High,



A PERSONAL NARRATIVE OF HIP HOP & PLACE IN IOWA CITY.

dios around town, we found hip-hop in the tiny apartment s to come at prices in this town. The first time I met Juan and Auto of the Bad Fathers, they were still the Committee, still had a crew strewn between Iowa City and Des Moines, still rocked a little place on Broadway. They played me a Richie Heller beat that sampled the Dynasty theme. I had producer's envy. I had it worse when I first saw Tack Fu's setup over on Mormon Trek. He had this big beast of a board, tons of records, stacks of CDs. Tack's musical fixation took over most of his living room. We sought him out after hearing *The Supplement*. Tack became infamous in this town. He released *Yen and Slang*, featuring rappers like K-Smooth and D.N.A., and then raised the bar higher with *Chained Reaction*, then went left-field with the 85 dB Monks, his



319 MIXTAPE

Clarence Johnson and Tallboy, of Radio Iowa City (see page 11) and *Little Village* put together a 24-track Iowa City mixtape with cuts from over two dozen Iowa City and Cedar Rapids artists.

319: We Get It How We Live II showcases fresh track from only local beatsmiths and lyricists, proving that the local hip hop scene is still alive and well.

Download the full *319: We Get It How We Live II* mixtape online at www.littlevillagemag.com/mixtape

and we met folks like DJ 007, Nate Unique, Hartless, some kids that aren't around. The meetings were incredible—trading tips and tactics. Playing beats for each other. Vince let me have my first go ever on a pair of 1200s. Sooner or later, rappers smelled our productivity, and started colonizing the meetings. The gatherings got louder, cats who were already eager to say their part jockeying for beats and a spot in the cipher. I met Joe the Juggla, aka Juggla Vein, a killer on the mic, and the meetings stopped soon after. Too much talk, not enough action.

A few years later, Joe and I got into a heated argument in the Little Pink House on Governor Street, lighting up the living room one day over what is and what isn't hip hop—I fell into a more open, liberal camp; Joe was a prescriptivist, a fundamentalist. I might have even called him the Joe-atollah after that. Jos I was learning to make beats above us, and we heard his sampler stumbling and stuttering through the ceiling. Years later I'd see him accompanied by a live drummer and upright bass at a party behind that same Little Pink House, spitting out ribbons of flow, a shower of pho-

nemes. He was in town for years before I ever made beats for him, and he's gone west now. The Pink House had me and another deejay living in the basement, a rapper and a producer in the second-story apartment, and it took forever for any of us to work together, a symptom of a scene without a setting.

Hopefully that condition is changing in 2010. On January 15, Public Space ONE looked like a scene happening in a *place*. It was a live hip hop show in Iowa City, and for the first time in a long time I didn't know any of the rappers, hadn't even *heard* of any of them. They were young kids, and I knew they were serious because the release they were celebrating was *on tape*. In 2010. It was [] [] [] [] [] [] (who want you to pronounce it Staples), Earthquake Baby, Yaw-Neez, and Dadacom, who got shouted out as *the best producer in Iowa City*. I tried not to take it personally; I remembered the first time I saw johndope rap over a beat I'd made, at a show at Gabe's, and how I whooped and bought extra drinks when he shouted me out the same. These young bucks are enthusiastic and collaborative. Purist just dropped an album at the Blue Moose, and [] [] [] [] [] [] and Mike V's hardcore rap band Illth opened.

Word about a new mixtape traveled fast: *all local cats. Real spit only*. I was putting it together for *Little Village* and WFKU, a podcast that Tallboy and I record every week, fighting through Pabst and mutual antagonism to make a show about rap. Rappers came out of the woodwork, cats I didn't even know like Wizard, and Kid Philosophy. Game show impresario and pedmall regular Tyrell Spitt volunteered. Cedar Rapids got drawn in, with CR all-stars like Imperfekt and Colorless, as well as Vo and Stookid, stepping up to represent for their town.

The space for creation to happen is important—it's been too long since Iowa City had the regular dope spot for it to happen. The WFKU recording sessions have been crucial, bringing seasoned vets and new jacks together to trade flows, and live shows and albums are dropping regularly now. But just as important as the physical space is the knowledge that it can happen, that hip hop in Iowa City is not just *now*, but has *been* all along, with a real base of experience and history that pin it all down to this area code. The rappers come and go, producers surface and then dive back into their dusty obscurity again, but it's been happening here the whole time, waiting to be discovered, shared and sampled, re-upped and reloaded, and released into the wild. **IV**

Clarence Johnson has been making beats, hosting radio shows, deejaying parties and going 'whoooooo' during hot sixteens in this town for 15 years.

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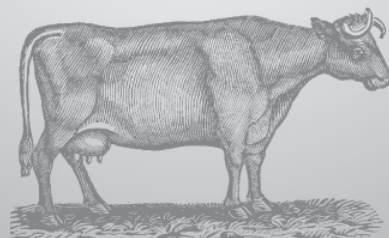
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the way of tack

There's a disconnect between meeting Tim Tack—an Iowa City hip hop producer and PATV's Assistant Community Programmer—and seeing

Tack Fu, his alter ego, host of channel 18's "85 dB TV." But not what you'd assume. The former brims over with outsized energy for his professions, which he takes very seriously. And perhaps it's this seriousness that infects Tack Fu, the host, as much of the time he introduces video clips and "underground" tracks in sincere, calming deadpan (if dashed with a bit of silliness). Usually hosts of variety shows, even on public access, fake the enthusiasm. But Tack doesn't front—he's confident in his skills, both producing and selecting "jazzy, bouncy" beats (think A Tribe Called Quest) and his newfound forte into video editing—so he lets his talent talk.

"It's more than just shooting and editing—which Tack is really good at. He has the energy and enthusiasm for video that's hard for

"In **music**, it's like: 16 bars of lyrics to hook then back to the...you know. There's a flow, a pattern. And **television**, it has the same sort of flow."

me to maintain these days," said Josh Goding, executive director of PATV. "He's made himself irreplaceable...I can't really see a future without Tack."

Most IC folk would likely remember Tack with the "Fu" addendum. "Fu" means "the way of"—in this case, "The Way of Tack."

"People say, 'you sound like you're one of the lost Wu-Tang members,'" Tack said. "Well, those Wu-Tang members are just as old as me, and I grew up on the same stuff. That

late-night stuff, that Saturday morning Kung Fu stuff. I enjoyed it as much as they did." (When pressed on how old he actually is, he repeated that he was simply as old as the Wu-



Tang Clan, which would put him over 35.)

As producer Tack Fu, he helped hold much of whatever hip hop scene the town had for much of the aughts, assembling 2005's *85 decibel Monks*, a production team which included The Chaircrusher, drunk, and The Beat Farmer and rhymes from Cousin of Bad Fathers, among others. In the five years that have passed, however, Tack moved away from wishing for another such album release.

"As Tack has been less active trying to make things happen in Iowa City, less stuff has been happening," said Kent Williams, a.k.a. producer The Chaircrusher, a.k.a. *Little Village*'s arts editor (this town is small). "Tack was the guy who knew everyone, who tried to work with everyone, so he was a catalyst. At this point, I don't see anyone stepping up to do that."

Some of Tack's lack of local activity can be ascribed to the fact that he's been licensing more of his music to television, mostly to reality TV shows like MTV's "My Super Sweet 16" and VH1's "Best Week Ever." A decline in hitting the music scene here, however, led to

the creation of Tack's relatively new day job at PATV, which he started in July of last year.

"It's a pretty seamless transition, from audio to video," Tack said. "I came in with audio editing skills and started using the same tactics. Going from scene to scene. In music, it's like: 16 bars of lyrics to hook then back to the...you know. There's a flow, a pattern. And television, it has the same sort of flow. You develop the skill."

As Tack tells it, after years of temping during the day (as a forklift operator, factory worker, even tax assistant) and rushing home to produce the music he loved at night, he decided to develop a resume that he could use to "infiltrate" positions he'd be excited about. The evasive American dream of looking forward to going to work. After volunteering at a friend's PATV show and securing an on-the-job training grant from Kirkwood, Tack convinced Goding to let him assist in the station's summer community programming.

Community programming is increasingly important for PATV and other public access

more tack fu

For more info on Tack Fu, visit his website: www.tackfu.com

more patv

For more info on PATV, watch channel 18 or visit: www.patv.tv. They are always looking for interns.

channels across the country, Goding explained. As budgets tighten and states gain the ability to syndicate public access channels from one state center, rather than spending the money on more locally oriented stations, pressure is put on the likes of PATV to prove their service

is critical to the community. (PATV receives 85 percent of its funding from the City of Iowa City.) Luckily for Goding, Tack and Iowa City, our town has much to capture. Tack's summer tasks included capturing and editing Jazz Fest, Arts Fest and Riverside's Trek Fest—and current winter jobs include The Englert's "The Nutcracker," local arts fair "What a Load of Craft," as well as various Prairie Lights events.

Music has never abandoned Tack, however, nor vice versa. Last summer he also started "85 dB TV," his own hip hop variety show airing Friday nights at 9:30 p.m. and again at 2:30 a.m. Saturday morning. Watching it, you notice that Tack is starting to show his age but refuses to dress like it—he's all about the pop culture t-shirts, baggy cargo pants and skateboard shoes, wearing a silver chain throughout it all. And whether or not you find his delivery odd, it's hard to deny that the tracks he selects are pretty damn good. It's a formula that seems to work well—Tack uploads his show to PegMedia.org, a site that allows other public access channels to syndicate across the country (from Portland, Oregon, to Portland, Maine, and all in-between) and even, somehow, worldwide.

"[The show] is real popular in South Korea, too," said Goding. "We have an international intern starting in the spring from Korea, and one of the things he said to me in the interview was that he was really impressed with '85 dB TV' and wanted to do his own show like Tack Fu."

As for music producing, Tack recently "caught the bug again," and hopes to collaborate with Iowa City Symphony Community Orchestra director Carey Bostian to create custom sample tracks that he and his producers can recut over their beats to spawn tracks free of sample licensing worry. If all goes according to plan, recording will start in June.

With PATV, he likes to keep his daily ambitions mostly small.

"I'm willing to go that extra mile for a better marriage between audio and video," Tack said. "I have no intentions of moving on from Iowa City. I'm always just trying to improve, to make better programming." Tack laughs, then adds: "I want to rule the world one day, of course. My goal is to rule the world and make billions of dollars...but one step at a time." **lv**

Paul Sorenson is Little Village's features editor, host of KRUI's Little Village Live, and a voracious music eater—even if he's tragically unable to produce any himself. Contact him at features@littlevillagemag.com for any Little Village related pitches.

AIR PIRATES



In 1990's *Pump Up the Volume*, Christian Slater played Happy Harry Hard-On, a renegade pirate radio deejay who shocked and entertained his growing legion of listeners with R-rated language and intermittent moments of Was (Not Was) and The Jesus and Mary Chain. Broadcasting from an undisclosed location

with his transmitter and voice changer, Hard Harry saved lives and changed hearts. His story, according to Hollywood, is that of the hip, young radical standing up to out-of-touch government bureaucrats who wish only to suppress free speech and obey their corporate masters. But how close to reality is this fictional narrative of unlicensed broadcast?

In January 1997, Jamie Schweser, Kristen Baumliar and other enthusiasts flipped the switch on for Iowa City Free Radio, a 5-watt station modeled closely after the popular Free Radio Berkeley. According to ICFR members, the original purpose was to radicalize the town and raise awareness for anti-corporate activism. Beaming out of pseudo-secret locations around downtown at 88.7 FM, ICFR offered up a fairly eclectic mix of music, talk, noise and politics until served with FCC papers on March 13, 1998. After laying low for a couple of months, ICFR went live again later that year supported by legal counsel and a few benefit shows at Gabe's. It continued to broadcast regularly for the next few years until petering out due to lack of interest.

The democratization of media under-

went a major shift in the years since the time of ICFR's founding. The proliferation of podcasts, file sharing, social networking and endless blogging has made the original "power to the people" intent of free radio somewhat of a moot point. The radio waves are still under corporate control, but citizens have the choice to merely sidestep

it as a preferred communications medium. This has cast a different light on the purpose of pirate radio in the new century.

In 2008, a small band of amateur broadcast engineers decided it was time to bring free radio back to town under

87.9 FM

A small band of amateur broadcast engineers decided it was time to bring free radio back to town under the name Radio Iowa City.

der the name Radio Iowa City. Originally operating at 105.1, they eventually settled at 87.9 FM, a play on KRUI's frequency. Whereas ICFR attempted to live up to lofty political goals, Radio Iowa City eschews the Berkeley model by being less rigid in its ideology. According to Radio Iowa City conspirator Marco Maisto, the station still has a civil disobedience angle but more importantly exists as creative and technical proof that it can be done. The benefit of this openness has allowed the station to act as an artistic catalyst as well as a platform for free speech. The serial drama, hip hop mixtape, bedtime stories and other original content produced by station collaborators is evidence their plan is working and could stand as exemplar of a new kind of pirate radio. **lv**

Matt Butler plans to outrun the FCC in an old jeep if it comes to that.

KNIGHT TIME

Sure, an open mic is like a box of chocolates, but Monday night at the Mill is my favorite lime cream-centered, caramel pecan toffee of a weekly free music night in Iowa City.

Since 1981, *Open Mic with J. Knight* has been an Iowa City institution, a place where up-and-coming talent shares the stage with long-established local musicians, where dorm room crooners become seasoned stage performers, and self-conscious songwriters become lyric poets of the night.

The man behind the music is J. Knight, a native of Dayton, Ohio, who planned to stay here for “just a couple of years” while his wife, Marilyn, attended the Writers’ Workshop. In 1985 they decided to stay for good, and J. kept what was quickly becoming the Midwest’s best-known open mic night going “to give people the chance to get onstage and play a real set, and to really get comfortable up there.”

So, what compels a man to host the same gig on the same night for more than 20 years?

He’s not in it for the money, and he’s not in it for the notoriety—only the madness of true love could drive a man out of doors at 10 p.m. on a bone-chilling 13-degree Sunday night, in February, to hang 50 fliers on the ped mall, on the North Side, all throughout the downtown area.

“This thing’s over,” he notes, ripping down a poster for an event two days past. J. is not one to cover another venue’s advertisement, and in the battle for kiosk space in the ped mall’s never-ending poster wars, he is a valiant and courteous, eh-hem, *Knight*. Playing the role of Excalibur is his staple gun, which smacks a dull echo into the cold air as he walks along,

sharing memories of open mics past.

“The style of playing has really changed over the years,” J. explains. “It’s gone from a lot of rockers strumming rock chords on acoustic guitars to now, when we have so many good players playing really great instruments.”

For many years, J. handed every player at his *Open Mic* a cassette tape of their recording.

“It got to the point where I had to ask some of the younger ones, ‘do you know what this is?’” he laughs.

There’s hardly an Iowa City musician who

She always brought a big crowd of her friends and would pass out the lyrics for everyone to sing along. But she was one of these people whose guitar was always out of tune and who wasn’t quite on key...I thought the tape might help her hear some of those things. But later, when I asked her how she liked the tape, she just said ‘Oh, I loved it, it was great!’ Some people just aren’t going to hear those mistakes no matter what!”

Aaron Schaefer has been playing J.’s *Open Mic* once a month for at least 10 years. “For me it is a great way to unwind. I joke that some people play golf...I play at the Mill.”

Aaron has collected over 100 *Open Mic* tapes over the years, and when J.’s tape deck was recently on the fritz, Schaefer was right there to offer another he had squirreled away in his garage.



He’s not in it for the money, and he’s not in it for the notoriety—only the madness of true love.

Whether he’s got his tape recorder rolling or not, J. is content just to observe the action.

“It’s fun to watch people develop,” he says, “you can tell when they work at it. You get better if you get up and play—you get better at using the mic and playing to the crowd.”

Knowing how to please the crowd is key to a successful open mic—and just being the best singer or guitarist isn’t necessarily the way to win an audience’s heart. “We had one guy come in who played all Hank Williams covers. He had to use a book, he had an out-of-tune guitar, and he was not a great singer, but he *believed* in Hank Williams. He was so honest, the crowd just loved him.”

Whether it’s an original or a cover, playing songs that you believe in—and that you really know—is another way to be an open mic success.

“I open almost every show with *Big River* by

doesn’t have an *Open Mic* tape stashed in some drawer or tucked away on a shelf.

“J. is the man,” notes guitarist and songwriter Tim Krein. “Everybody who plays gets to walk out with this *tape*, with their name *caligraphied* on the spine. It’s unbelievable, and it’s an important thing that he is doing, encouraging people and making them comfortable. He’s even put up with a lot of the crap that I’ve tried to play here!”

In addition to being simple, cool badges of *Open Mic* honor, the tapes give novice players an opportunity to hear where they need improvement, and work on their sound. Though sometimes, this learning opportunity doesn’t have exactly the desired effect.

“We had one girl back in the ‘80s who would come in and play these campfire songs.

J'S TIPS FOR OPEN MIC SUCCESS

First time? Don't sweat it, virgins of the stage, J. Knight is here with the guidance you need to get through your 30 minutes with dignity and practically nobody noticing all of those bad mistakes you made.

TIP #1 Relax. Just do it. Do what you're comfortable with. Make your first song a song that you can play cold, one that you've done so many times you don't have to think.

TIP #2 Adjust things. After you've played a couple of open mics, the songs become second nature. Then you can work on the presentation. Maybe you are one of those people who should talk between every song. Maybe you are one of those people who shouldn't!

TIP #3 Don't apologize! It's your gig; it's your time. You're going to make mistakes, so just laugh and go on.

TIP #4 Play to the audience. Once you've played *Open Mic* a couple of times, you'll start to notice the audience more. Sometime's they're with you, sometimes they're not. After awhile, when you get comfortable, you might adjust your set to keep them more interested.

TIP #5 Watch the drinking—it doesn't work for everybody!

Johnny Cash. I'm comfortable playing it, and it helps get me warmed up," says J.

Attending the Mill's *Open Mic*, one feels a part of an inclusive community of musicians, where all ages and abilities are welcomed into the fold by this twinkly blue-eyed, soft-spoken man. Performing on the same stage, with the same Oriental rug backdrop, in the same spotlight as the local and touring bands you pay to see at the Mill, adds to the sense that it's a "real" show, and gives the players a feeling of legitimacy. This familiar atmosphere, where so many legendary shows have gone down over the years, connects the amateur with the professional in spirit, and for at least one night, we're all part of your rock-n-roll fantasy.

Nik Strait, a frequent busker on the ped mall and a 15-year veteran of *Open Mic* night, credits J. with encouraging him to continue playing music.

"J. was the only person that would support me constantly," he said. "*Open Mic* offers a

real sense of community, and it's a great way to de-stress."

At no time was this sense of community more apparent than at the Mill's "final" *Open Mic* night back in 2003. With a line-up of notables such as Aaron Schaefer, Laura Kittrell and the band Half Fast, this farewell bash was sad and fun and, well, obviously not the farewell it was expected to be.

"I got word halfway through the show that we were going to be able to stay open," J. remembers, "but I didn't say anything at that point, because I didn't want to interrupt a great show!"

Many an Iowa City legend has swayed upon a lone stool on the *Open Mic* stage, from Greg Brown to Dave Moore to Kelly Pardekooper. But J. doesn't like to drop names. "There are just so many great players in Iowa City, and I wouldn't want anyone to feel left out."

A formidable musician in his own right, with mad picking skills that could flatten a three-chord wannabe in seconds, J. often steps onstage himself throughout the night, joining in on harmonica or guitar. If you really wanna get his feet to tappin'? "Sing harmonies," he says, especially gospel harmonies, like the ones he heard his older sister sing on the radio back in Dayton—but that's another story.

Every thriving music scene has its unsung heroes—be it the booking agent, the sound guy, the promoter, the lighting technician. Or, be it the man who does all of these things, scheduling 30-minute sets for eight performers a week, running sound and lights, distributing promotional material, and reminding us all to "tip our waitresses, they're working hard out there," every Monday night for more than 20 years.

Our grateful city salutes the man who "always likes to play a little something first, and make a couple of mistakes so everyone feels comfortable." Who has made it his business to champion the beginner, the new-in-town, and the just-passing-through. Musicians whose voices may break, whose chords may not always ring true, but who've practiced real hard and need to voice their break-ups, their drunken one-night stands, and their renditions of all-time favorite songs before a live audience.

I tip my hat to the man who's made that happen every Monday since 1981, Iowa City's beloved master of ceremonies and welcoming minstrel. Thanks for never laughing at us, J. Knight. **lv**

Stephanie Catlett is currently an orange nougat open mic'er, but she strives for dark chocolate caramel. With nuts.

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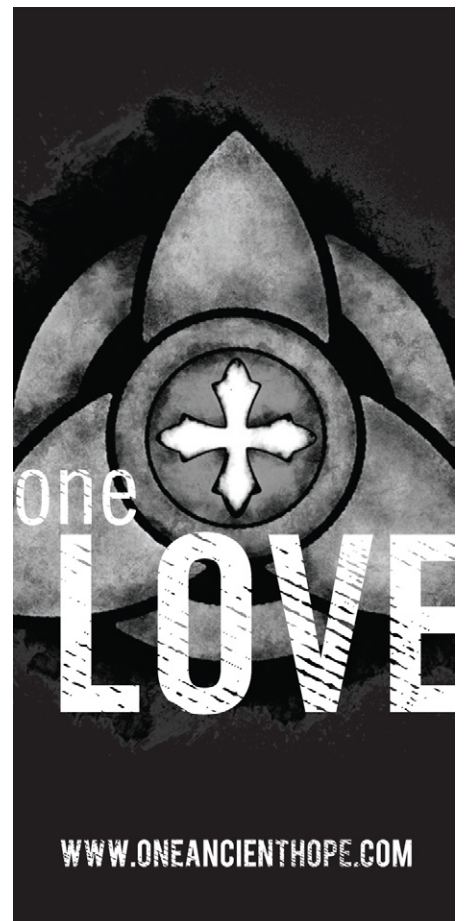
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Greatness Unbroken

If you're the kind of moviegoer who wishes you'd lived back when X was making movies (where X stands for your favorite great director), if like me you wish you had been there for the fresh projections of *Godfather I* rather than opening week-end of *Godfather III*—even if you're simply content to see Penelopé Cruz without her shirt on—go see *Broken Embraces*, the newish Pedro Almodóvar movie, which in more populous civilizations I would have reviewed four months ago.

Los Abrazos Rotos, as it's more euphoniously named in the original Spanish, which plays at the Bijou from March 5th through the 11th, is yet another work from the golden age of Almodóvar, our auteur on par with the likes of Fellini. Every single shot sings of his unique style: the pop-art crispness of colors, the clarity and geometry of Mediterranean sun, the explorations of a lingering fascist mentality, the sympathetic misfits, the melodrama, the Platonic form of beauty that is Penelopé Cruz. *Broken Embraces* is not, I will say, his greatest movie; its emotions don't run as deep as *All About My Mother* or *Volver*. It may, however, be his most complex movie. I don't mean that it's hard to follow, just that every theme and every shot are deeply interwoven into the whole.

The movie shuttles back and forth, with the effortlessness of memory, from now to the early 1990s. Narrated by "Harry Caine" (Lluís Homar), the pseudonym of Mateo Blanco, a movie director back then and a screenwriter now, the story revolves around his tragic love affair with Lena (Cruz), who is entangled with a millionaire financier and movie producer by the name of Ernesto Martel. Essentially, we have the muse, the artist and the money—and the money ruins everything. But this melodrama is given life by all the strange rhyming subplots and lovely echoing imagery.

Broken Embraces is a movie literally about the making of movies: Lena gets a part in Mateo's comedy *Women and Suitcases* (a thinly veiled version of Almodóvar's own *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*); their romance takes place between the scenes; but

tionally. There's even a Midge character, Judit (Blanca Portillo), with a subplot that is also a variation on a theme by Hitchcock.

The world-is-a-stage theme is easy to overdo in the postmodern age. We know, we know: Identity is a performance, there's nothing outside the text, the medium is the message—it has



Reality is somewhere bouncing between the mirrors.

been so now for 50 years. But Almodóvar handles the life-is-a-movie metaphor so deftly we're left groping for a vocabulary to catch up to his images. When Mateo first sees Lena, she turns

even what's going on between the scenes is being shot by Martel's obsessive gay son, who's ostensibly making a documentary about the making of the movie, but is secretly doing detective work for his father. At the same time, the movie is a loving homage to any number of master movies. A name like Harry Caine reflects Orson Welles, whose most famous roles were Harry Lime and Citizen Kane, and also Michael Caine who played Harry Palmer in *The Ipcress File*. There are references, explicit or implicit, to Louis Malle, Roberto Rossellini, Michael Powell and probably countless others. But by far the film at the center of the film is Hitchcock's *Vertigo*.

Broken Embraces is *Vertigo* turned inside-out. In *Vertigo*, Scotty falls in love with a woman who, unbeknownst to him, is doing an act to ensnare him. After her staged death, he finds her again and now becomes her "director," making her up to try to look like the woman he lost. In *Broken Embraces*, Mateo begins as a real-life director who falls in love with a woman who really is an actress in his movie. After he loses her he can no longer direct—he loses his sight literally and emo-

in classic slow-motion and looks right at us. Her beauty is overwhelming to us viewers, as it is to Mateo, who's narrating the scene in retrospect. Just moments later, she's auditioning for a role in his new movie in a variety of costumes, including one that turns Penelopé Cruz, *mirabile dictu*, into the spitting image of Audrey Hepburn. Suddenly we realize that Mateo is directing her how to turn and look at him. Reality is somewhere bouncing between the mirrors.

Broken Embraces keeps echoing for days in the mind, but don't deny yourself the experience of seeing it on the (semi-) big screen at the Bijou. Why deny yourself the full experience of what makes Almodóvar truly great: his uncanny ability with red, orange and yellow? Did I mention that you get to see Penelopé Cruz naked? **IV**

Scott Samuelson teaches philosophy at Kirkwood Community College. He is also sometimes a moderator on KCRG's "Ethical Perspectives on the News" and sometimes a cook at Simone's Plain and Simple, the French restaurant in the middle of nowhere.

GET LIT

AT MISSION CREEK

For every musical heavyweight offered onto your Mission Creek plate, a scribe of equal course is there to usher you in. This year, the wonder-kinds at the controls of Mission Creek—Craig Eley, Tanner Illingworth, Andre Perry and Todd Olmstead—have filled the week with a six-degrees-of-literary who's-who, with New York's finest and Iowa City's literary mainstays.

MONDAY, APRIL 1 PRAIRIE LIGHTS, 7PM

Ashley Butler, a native Virginian with an M.F.A. in nonfiction from Iowa, will open the literary events with a reading from her essay collection *Dear Sound of Footstep*. An investigation into parentage, *Dear Sound* explores her mother's death, and her estranged paternal relationship. Out on the independent imprint Sarabande Books, Butler's works have also been published in *Ninth Letter*, *jubilat*, *Gulf Coast* and *Creative Nonfiction*.

FRIDAY, APRIL 2 PRAIRIE LIGHTS, 7PM

Reading alongside heralded Iowa writers Ben Hale and Stephen Kuusisto, New York City via New Orleans author and Open City Books co-founder Thomas Beller, arrives in Iowa City to much fanfare. With eight volumes of written and edited work, one tri-annual literary magazine, an online neighborhood, and one small press to his name, Thomas Beller is one of literature's finest practitioners. A former staff writer at the *New Yorker*, Beller's work has appeared in *Best American Short Stories*, *The New York Times*, *ELLE*, *Spin*, *Vogue* and *Slate*.



Kiki Petrosino

SATURDAY, APRIL 3 THE MILL, 2-6PM

Spotted with the festival's final two readings, a book fair covering Saturday afternoon will be tabled by some of the nation's most exciting small-press literary journals and imprints, including the *Iowa Review*, *Sarabande Books*, Chicago's biannual *Make Magazine*, *Hobart Magazine*, co-founded by Mission Creek special guest Eula Biss, and the on-line literary quarterly *Wag's Review*.

SATURDAY, APRIL 3 THE MILL, 3PM

A chronicler of cultures, Colson Whitehead brings with him a literary know-how and swagger perfectly fit for Mission Creek. One of New York literature's figureheads, Whitehead's books have been finalists for the PEN/Hemingway award, the L.A. Times Fiction Award, and the National Book Critics Circle Award. Oftentimes investigating cultural minutiae for the synecdochal realities they truly are, Colson Whitehead is a writer of uncommon insight. His novels speak to a unique breadth of understanding character and situation that make him a perfect fit for the festival.

Supporting readings from UI M.F.A. graduates Eula Biss (nonfiction), and Ashley Butler's fellow Sarabande-ista Kiki Petrosino (poetry) round out what has the makings of a legendary Iowa City reading. Biss' feel for innovative nonfiction have drawn rave reviews from David Shields, Sherman Alexie



Colson Whitehead

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FRI, MAR 5
THU, MAR 11

AN EDUCATION

Directed by Lone Scherfig | UK

BROKEN EMBRACES

Directed by Pedro Almodovar | Spain

SUN, MAR 7

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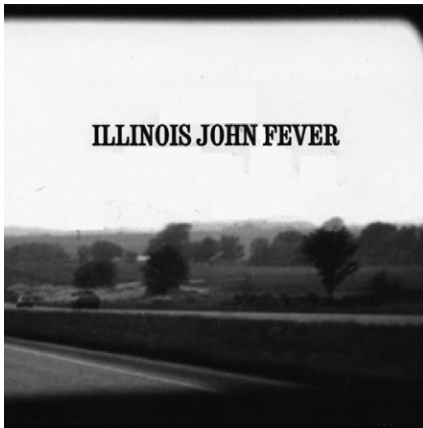
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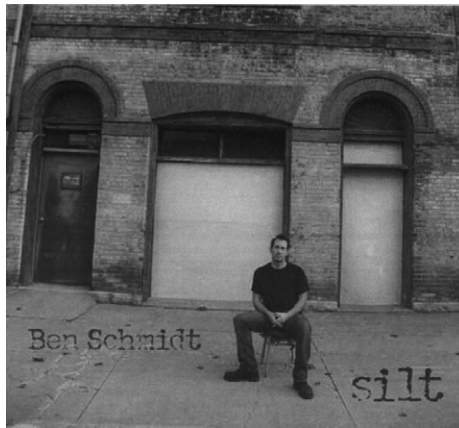
Illinois John Fever

Now Is Not The Way It Is
myspace.com/illinoisjohnfever

Country Blues can really be a challenge for both performers and listeners. The basic musical gestures ossified into cliché 50 years ago, and it's rare to find someone who can wring something new out of them. The only way it can work out is if you commit to it totally and keep doing it until you get it right. "Now Is Not The Way It Is" is exactly that—three guys getting it right.

What makes boogies like "Monkeyhouse" and "The 4-12 March" work—aside from the sweet slide work and minimal drumming—is Lute Tucker's ability to fulminate and rage. I don't even understand what he's singing, but it's great fun—street corner crazy-man ranting turned into hillbilly blues shouting. "Girl Needs A Bell" takes it down a notch in tempo and turns a single repeated major chord riff into five minutes of dreamy blues with the refrain "oh me oh my I got no me I got no mine." What does it mean? You might as well ask what "I got a cow she won't milk, I got a girl just the same" means. Tucker's slurred, woozy delivery is perfectly effective at conveying mood, less so at objective meaning.

Illinois John Fever's songs shamble along like a barefoot bum on the fourth day of a five-day drunk, but they're never sloppy. They just relax into the groove so much they sound like they could take a nap without missing a beat. Their individual talents—which are considerable—notwithstanding, it's the comfort and joy of their ensemble playing that makes Illinois John Fever masters of the boogie.



Ben Schmidt

Silt
Self-released
myspace.com/benschmidtmusic

Ben Schmidt is a guy who writes songs and plays guitar, which in Iowa City, means he has to work pretty hard to stand out from the crowd. Schmidt's singing is precisely pitched and without ornament. His songwriting has a pleasant, relaxed accessibility. His guitar playing is accomplished, but Schmidt's taste doesn't run to flashy displays. He's the perfect guest for Iowa Radio's "Live At The Java House"—he doesn't curse or yell or turn anything up too loud. This is pretty faint praise, the sort musicians hate to be damned with, but Schmidt keeps his awesomeness stealthed. He stands out not for any gimmicks or outlandish gestures, but rather for the subtlety of his writing and his unforced, natural performances.

The title track "Silt" spins along in a relaxed minor-tinged lope, but each line is of epic length, and the lyric spins out a complex extended metaphor: "At the end of the day we are silt and sediment, a dirty line to remind us where we've been." Along the way there's an allusion to Huckleberry Finn, wistfulness for "a time before the flood," and veiled reflections on regret and mortality. It gains power from being rooted in the actuality of living by a river.

"Neglect" returns to the river for its opening simile: "Old Neglect jumped up like a catfish fighting for the right to lay below the water." For being a paean to laziness it's a pretty finely worked lyric. The finger-picked guitar and brushed drums are a comfortable backdrop to a lyric whose extravagant specificity ("all we've got is basil leaves and sweet tomato mermaids kiss the beach of all our seas") belies Schmidt's relaxed, smooth delivery.

The songs on "Silt" are all like that—Schmidt lulls you with his considerable facility for comfortable folk-tinged pop, but there's always

more going on than you might first apprehend. It's a lot easier to write something fancy or complicated than to write something simple and true, and Schmidt does the latter as well as I've heard it done in Iowa City.

Kent Williams is an optimist who loves life, sport, and hates lies. He is Little Village's arts editor.

Olivia Rose Muzzy

Fisherman's Dream
Self-released
myspace.com/oliviarosemuzzy

Olivia Rose Muzzy makes an odd brand of folk music with a double bass, loop pedal, and her wild, expressive vocals. Her debut record, *Fisherman's Dream*, presents her live act accurately, rather than tracking all of the many bass parts comprising each piece separately, we're treated to marked addition as she records each part and then loops it.

The album's second cut, "Oceans/Field Dance" is a splendid example of her architectural abilities. The song begins with a bass line which sounds like sap dripping from a tree. Rose Muzzy rushes in with a double-tracked 16th-note vamp and makes room for mid-range flutters to play call and response with high coos and squeals before she begins to sing.

Her voice is unassuming at first, gently leading you through garland-laced walkways, but her unpredictable vocals highlight something elemental in her songs. The song reaches a peak when drummer Ed Bornstein joins and Rose Muzzy begins to wail, "Teach me to throw away myself." No longer sweetly guiding, but blunt and direct, Rose Muzzy's voice drops from an intense, impassioned howl to low, cavernous noise sitting in the back of her throat. The song closes with Rose Muzzy unleashing a series of tribal chants as the music fades out.

The almost poppy "Waltz for You" follows up the abrasive and jarring close to "Oceans/Field Dance." "Waltz" begins tightly with a bounding bass line from Rose Muzzy bouncing on Bornstein's stutter-steps. Rose Muzzy subtly adds elegiac sweeps and swells and Bornstein's fills get gradually more off-kilter and idiosyncratic as the song progresses. Suddenly there's a symphony of intermingling bass lines as the drum part moves from tight bass and snare work to splash after splash of cymbal. The result is the most conventionally satisfying moment on the record as Rose Muzzy howls above the fray, "I see

you/I wrote this waltz for you,” sounding both ecstatic and pleading.

Alex Body

Just Say Yes

Self-released

Alex Body's solo debut, *Just Say Yes*, is a glitchy, lo-fi epic consisting of condemnations of himself and humanity over digital and analog loops and faux pipe organ drones.

Just Say Yes takes some time to warm up, but by the third track, “Without a Friend to Even Call,” Body hits his stride. The album never shies away from slower pacing, but “Without a Friend to Even Call” is a dirge. Body's pinched, faltering voice barely rises above the synth hum and the plod of his Casio-based beats until the heart-wrenching chorus. Body lays down an eerie, creaky harmony wailing “Let the world damn me/let me damn the world” for the rest of the song as whines and squeaks from his synthesizer envelope his voice and swallow it whole by the song's end.

Body's beats get considerably livelier on the “Sixteen Years.” The verses are structured over long, droning synth chords and whined laments, but for the chorus he unloads a kraut-rock rave-up. Body's creepy, stuttered shouts of “Sixteen years ago” spill out over a frantic burst of percussion, which sounds like a dub rhythm on speed. It's easily one of the weirdest and most delightful moments on the record then it fades into the monstrously demoralizing “Distorted Hallway.”

“Distorted Hallway” contains the album's sunniest sentiment: “The human race/we're so fucked./Everything we've done/doesn't amount to much.” Body's reverberated analysis floats over a frenzy of phase-shifted synth swirls—like ghosts whirling around his head—and an ominous drone

riding a stock beat off a cheap keyboard.

Just Say Yes can feel a bit monotonous thematically, but much of the overwhelming cynicism is delivered with Body's tongue planted in cheek. Similarly, many of his drone-heavy compositions are highlighted by whimsical synth splashes and warm, funky workouts like the ones at the beginning of “Sixteen Years” and at the end of the album as “Discharge” fades out.

John Schlotfelt is ready for spring. Email him if you have comments about weather or questions about music at john.schlotfelt@littlevillemag.com.

COMING TO TOWN >>



The Woes

Heaven Knows

Self-released

myspace.com/thewoes

With the Woes' latest release, *Heaven Knows*, the New York collective has woven a

pastiche of dusty folk, bluegrass, Delta blues, New Orleans jazz, a pinch of punk and vintage R&B into a surprisingly cohesive whole.


“The Secret” opens the album marching on a staccato bass line. It's a set of colorful costumes away from rocking the French Quarter. “The Secret” would be a complete wreck in the hands of an amateur, but bandleader Osei Essed keeps the sundry elements in line. Essed highlights individual elements by harmonizing with the horn section, giving the accordion a bar here and there to open up a bit, and letting the harmonica player tear into a fiery solo. The tight structure of the song adds a punch to the touch of punk which seeps in, after each refrain a team of backing vocalists gnash on some “yeahs” like a chorus of cackling hyenas.

Not everything on *Heaven Knows* thrives on a rollicking, kitchen-sink aesthetic. The Woes light a few stripped down torch songs. “A Heart for Dreaming” stands out as the strongest with a mournful, minor key violin and haunting rustles of pedal steel guitar. It starts off sounding a little tear in the beer, bare and taught, with Essed's laments and the violin taking the lead, before the drums really kick in and the violin knocks off some violent staccato stabs while Essed gets some catharsis howling out the chorus.

Yet, like a dormitory mattress, *Heaven Knows* gets sags a little in the middle. The Woes stuck “Broke Again (An Improvisation)” smack in the heart of the record to help bolster a live feel. However, the shambling mess of “Broke Again” seems less affable and playful with the weakest composition, “For Nothing,” nipping at it's heels. The Latin-tinged barn-burner of “Sranan” and the raucous, vengeful “Hanging's Fair” wrap things up on a high, energetic note.

The Woes will be at The Mill with Shame Train on Saturday, March 13.

John Schlotfelt



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ART/EXHIBITS

African American Historical Museum and Cultural Center of Iowa

55 12th Ave SE, Cedar Rapids

www.blackiowa.org

14th Annual Banquet "Celebration of Educational Excellence", Mar. 27 • No Roads Lead to Buxton, ongoing

AKAR

257 E. Iowa Ave. Iowa City

www.akardesign.com

Shoko Teruyama, through Mar. 1 • 2010 Yunomi Invitational, opens Mar. 26

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids

www.crma.org

Thursday evening free admission, 4-8pm

SmArt Saturday, Mar. 6 • 10 Ways to Collect on a Budget, Mar. 18 • Drawn to Drawing, Less is More, Malvina Hoffman, Mauricio Lasansky, Art in Roman Life, Grant Wood: In Focus, The American Century, & Treasures from the National Collection ongoing

CSPS/Legion Arts

1103 Third St SE, Cedar Rapids

www.legionarts.org

Translations, ongoing

Faulconer Gallery

Grinnell College, 1108 Park St., Grinnell

www.grinnell.edu/fulconergallery

Repeat, Reveal, React: Identities in Flux, through Mar. 21 • Influence: Faculty Selections from College Collections, through Mar. 21

Herbert Hoover Presidential Museum

West Branch

www.nps.gov/heho

Patterns of the Past: A Century of American Quilting, 1840-1940, through Mar. 21 • Iowa A to Z, ongoing

Hudson River Gallery

538 South Gilbert St., Iowa City

www.hudsonrivergallery.com

Keith Achepohl, through Apr. 10

Johnson County Historical Society

310 5th St., Coralville

www.jchsiowa.org

Irish Fest, Mar. 17, 2-4pm • 4-H Traveling Photos, opens Mar. 23 • A Century of Adventure, 100 Years of Scouting, ongoing

Old Capitol Museum

Pentacrest, Iowa City

www.uiowa.edu/~oldcap

WorldCanvass, Asia, Mar. 5, 5-7pm

Public Space One

129 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.myspace.com/publicspaceone

Jill Kambs, opens Mar 5, 7pm

University Museum of Art

www.uiowa.edu/uima

Check website for locations

Two Turntables and a Microphone: Hip-hop Contexts featuring Harry Allen's Part of the Permanent Record: Photos from the Previous Century • Opens Mar. 27 • UIMA@IMU, ongoing

MUSIC

Blue Moose Tap House

211 Iowa Ave, Iowa City

www.bluemooseic.com

David Daniell And Douglas McCombs, Mar. 4, 9pm • JC Brooks And The Uptown Sound, Mar. 6, 7pm • State & Madison, Mar. 7, 6pm • School of Flyentology, Mar. 12, 9pm • Every Time I Die with Polar Bear Club, Trapped Under Ice and Four Year Strong, Mar. 17, 5pm • Diplomats Of Solid Sound, Mar. 25, 9pm • **Mission Creek Festival, Mar. 30-Apr. 3:** Little Dragon, featuring The Envy Corps, porno galactica, and the Western Front, Apr. 2, 9pm, • Camera Obscura, Apr. 3, 6pm

CSPS

1103 Third St SE, Cedar Rapids

www.legionarts.org

The Crossroads Project, opening performance, Mar. 5, 8pm • The Crossroads Project, closing performance, Mar. 6, 6pm • Dervish, Mar. 7, 7pm • Gadji-Gadjo with Longital, Mar. 14, 7pm • Daniel Martin Moore & Ben Sollee, Mar. 15, 7pm • Taj Weekes & Adowa, Mar. 18, 8pm • Alash, Mar. 20, 8pm • John Gorka with Denice Franke, Mar. 25, 8pm • Adrian Legg, Mar. 27, 7pm • Las Rubias del Norte, Apr. 2, 8pm

Dawn's Hide & Bead Away

220 E. Washington St.

www.dawnsbeads.com

Dawn's Coffeehouse: Karla Miller, Jeffery Morgan, and Laurie Haag, Mar. 5, 5pm • Mission Creek: Dawn's at Dusk: Apr. 2 & 3, 6pm

Englert

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.englert.org

United States Air Force Band, Mar. 9, 7pm • Iowa City Community String Orchestra, Mar. 28, 3pm • **Mission Creek Festival, Mar. 30-Apr. 3:** Booker T, Mar. 31, 8pm • Greg Brown with Pieta Brown, Apr. 3, 8pm

Java House

211 E. Washington Street, Iowa City

www.javahouse.com

Shows start at 7pm unless otherwise noted

Sarazin Blake, The Vagabonds, The Heligoats, Mar.

4 • Steve Grismore Quartet, Mar. 5 • Hot Club of Davenport / Koplant No, Mar. 12 • Bethann Gavin / The Ericksons, Mar. 26 • **Mission Creek Festival:** Star City, Ed Gray, Apr. 1, 8pm • Equilateral, Apr. 2, 8:30pm • Apr. 3, Chrash, 8pm

The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City

www.icmill.com

Shows at 9pm unless otherwise noted

Study Hall, the game, Sundays, 9pm-Midnight

Open Mic with J. Knight, Mondays, 8pm, call 338-6713 to sign up

Tuesday Night Social Club, Tuesdays

Rock Art, Mar. 5 • Dave Zollo & the Body Electric w. Sad Iron Music, Mar. 6 • Brooks Strause, Monadnoc, Light Pollution, Mar. 9 • Burlington Street Bluegrass Band, Mar. 10, 7pm • Via Audio w. Pattern Is Movement, Oh Kuso, Mar. 11 • Ed Gray w. John Bellows, Mar. 12 • Shame Train w. The Woes, The Lonelyhearts, Mar. 13 • Trent Wagler & The Steel Wheels, Mar. 18, 8pm • Leslie & The Ly's w. Christopher The Conquered, Mar. 19 • Burning Halos w. The Sullivan Gang & Justin Alan Cox, Mar. 20 • Screens w. TBA, Mar. 23, 10pm • Tyrone Wells, Mar. 24, 630pm • University of Iowa Jazz Performance, Mar. 25 • Fruit Bats w. Blue Giant, Mar. 26 • Burlington Street Bluegrass Band, Mar. 27, 6pm • Ol' Thrashers Reunion 3 w. HOTT, Liberty Leg, Acoustic Guillotine, The Tercels, Bad Accidents, Mar. 27, 10pm • Roxi Copland w. Shannon Curtis & Rae Fehring, Mar. 28, 6pm • **Mission Creek Festival, Mar. 30-Apr. 3:** KRUI & TNSC Kick-Off Party w. The Cave Singers, Birds & Batteries, Mondo Drag, Mar. 30 • The Daredevil Christopher Wright, Brighton MA, Sarah Mannix & the Wandering Bears, The New Bodies, Mar. 31 • David Bazan, Headlights, Caroline Smith & the Goodnight Sleeps, The Poison Control Center, Apr. 1 • The Meat Puppets, Joe Jack Talcum (of The Dead Milkmen), Sam Locke-Ward and the Boo-Hoos, Apr. 2, 6pm • Cory Chisel & the Wandering Sons, Diplomats of Solid Sound, Sad Iron Music, Apr. 3, 8pm

Old Capitol Museum

Pentacrest, Iowa City

www.uiowa.edu/~oldcap

Piano Sundays: Alan Huckleberry and Rene Lecouna, Mar 7, 1:30pm

Orchestra Iowa

www.orchestraiowa.org

Reflections, Sinclair Auditorium, Mar. 20, 8pm • Reflections, West High School, Mar. 21, 2pm

The Picador /Gabe's

330 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.thepicador.com

All shows at 9pm unless otherwise noted

Bible of the Devil with Bloodcow & Snow Demon, Mar. 12 • Goes Cube with East of the Wall & Aseethe, Mar. 24 • Zoos of Berlin with Child Bites & Local TBA, Mar. 26 • **Mission Creek Festival, Mar. 30-Apr. 3:** Pocahaunted with Sun Araw,

A-LIST

CALENDAR



Joe and Vicki Price

George's Buffet

312 E. Market St.

Friday, March 19, 9pm

Free

www.joepriceblues.com

Make no mistake, those festival passes are a bargain—worth every penny. But this March, if you be talkin' bout hard times, and if this tax season even Uncle Sam ain't showing you no kinda love, you might just find yourself up Mission Creek without a paddle.

Enter George's Buffet, where even the cheap whiskey (there's plenty of it) comes with a beer back, a single 10-spot will get you your very own pitcher (with enough left over to leave a healthy tip), and, Friday, March 19, Joe and Vicki Price are playing... for free!

Better get there early because these two locals always pack the house—and it's no wonder: Their latest album "Rain or Shine" is getting high praise nationally (Independent Music Awards named it the Best Blues Album of 2009) and internationally as Bluesforum (Netherlands) has nominated them for the same prize on the global scale. They're in the running for an IMA People's Voice award, too, and you can go vote for them at www.independent-musicawards.com/imanominee/2010/Album/Blues.

Top-notch music in a tiny, unpretentious bar? Go ahead and bring your blues, the Prices be right.

Peaking Lights, Rene Hell, Mar. 30 • Xiu Xiu with tUnE-yArDs, Talk Normal, Coyote Slingshot, Mar. 31, 8pm • Acid Mothers Temple with Over-Gain Optimal Death, Wet Hair, Broken Water, Apr. 1 • Tim Hecker with Greg Davis & Lwa, Apr. 2 • Grant Hart (of Husker Du) with The Tanks, Apr. 3

Public Space One

129 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.myspace.com/publicspaceone

We All Have Hooks For Hands, One For The Team, Mar. 9, 9pm • These Are Powers, Javelin, Datagun, School of Flyentology, Mar. 25, 9pm • Mission Creek Festival, Mar. 30-Apr. 3: DINOSAUR FEATHERS W. Replacing the Robots, So Much Fun, Happy Chromosomes, Mar. 30, 630pm • Molly Ringwald with Capgun Coup, the Wheelers, Old Panther, Mar. 31, 9pm • CHRISTOPHER THE CONQUERED with Roommate, Porno Galactica, Mumfords, Apr. 2, 730pm • Anni Rossi, with Casiotone for the Painfully Alone, Golden Birds, Jeff Ray, Apr. 3, 8pm

Riverside Casino

3184 Highway 22, Riverside

www.riversidecasinoandresort.com

The Pointer Sisters, Mar. 20, 8pm

The Sanctuary

405 S. Gilbert Street

sanctuarypub.qwestoffice.net

Jazz Jam, Mar. 11, 9pm • Ben Schmidt, Mar. 13, 9pm • Mission Creek Festival: Brooks Strause with Monadnoc, Dewi Sant, Apr. 1, 9pm

University of Iowa Music Dept.

www.uiowa.edu/~music

See website for locations

John Muriello, baritone; David Gompper, piano, Mar. 6, 2pm • Alan Huckleberry and Rene Lecuona, Mar. 7, 130pm • University Band/Concert Band, Mar. 8, 730pm • Army Band Brass Quintet, Mar. 22, 730pm • Henry Fairs, guest organist, Mar. 25, 730pm • Festival of Contemporary Music, Mar. 26-27 • Celebrating Music of Schumann and Chopin, Apr. 2, 730pm

White Lightning Warehouse

www.myspace.com/whitelightingic

Human Hands, Birth, Gem Jones, Renee Hell, Slime young, Mar. 7, 10pm • MC/VL, Kitten Forever, 69-1-1, Mar. 21, 9pm • Stress Ape, Supersonic Piss, Viking Fuck, Mar. 26, 9pm

Yacht Club

13 S. Linn St., Iowa City

www.iowacityyachtclub.org

Shows at 9pm unless otherwise noted

Henhouse Prowlers + Porch Builder, Mar. 5 • Dennis McMurrin and the Demolition Band, Mar. 6 • Giant Panda Guerilla Dub Squad + D. Bess, Mar. 8 • Dance Party USA with Electricity and DJ Tutt, Mar. 9, 10pm • Umphrey's McGee Post Show Party, Mar. 10, 10pm • Papadosio + DJ Von Marxen, Mar. 11 • Haiti Benefit w/Meh Funk + Mother Culture

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+ Stubborn Tiny Lights, Mar. 12 • Paul Kresowik & The Instrumentals + Collectible Boys, Mar. 13 • School of Flyentology, Mar. 16, 10pm • St. Patrick's Day Massacre VII, Mar. 17, 2pm • Head for the Hills + Filling Space + Songbird Bethann, Mar. 20 • Dance Party USA with Rich Rok and Tyler Coon, Mar. 23, 10pm • Dead Larry + Lunar Funk Theory + Jon Wayne & The Pain, Mar. 26 • Deathface (Johnny Love of Guns N Bombs) and Lady Espina, Mar. 30 • **Mission Creek Festival, Mar. 30-Apr. 3:** MANNIX! with Carusella, Beast Wars, Liberty Leg, Mar. 31 • Bomb Squad with The Hood Internet, Database, School of Flyentology Apr. 1 • The Gglitch + D. Bess, Apr. 2 • Dennis McMurrin & Demolition Band, Apr. 3

THEATER/DANCE/PERFORMANCE

Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.englert.org

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Mar. 5 & 6 • In the Mood, Mar. 12, 7:30pm • Bob & Tom Comedy All-Stars, Mar. 26, 7:30pm & 9:45pm

Hancher Auditorium

www.hancher.uiowa.edu

at US Cellular Center, Cedar Rapids

See website for showtimes

Avenue Q, March 26-28

Iowa Theatre Artists Company

4709 220th Trail, Amana

www.iowatheatreartists.org

Spoon River Anthology, Mar. 26 & 27

Johnson County Senior Center

28 S. Linn St., Iowa City

Irish Ceili, Mar. 6, 7pm

No Shame Theatre

Theatre B, UI Theatre Building

www.noshame.org

Fridays in March, 11pm

Penguin's Comedy Club

Clarion Hotel, 525 33rd Ave. SW, Cedar Rapids

www.penguinscomedyclub.com

Check website for showtimes

Mark Gross, Mar. 5-6 • Dan St. Paul, Mar. 12-13 •

Riverside Theatre

213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City

www.riversidetheatre.org

Check website for showtimes

Killadelphia: Mixtape of a City, Mar. 5-14

Summit Restaurant Comedy Night

10 S. Clinton St, Iowa City

www.thesummitrestaurantandbar.com

Shows start at 9:30pm

Charlie Wiener, Jeff Wozer, Mar. 3 • Scott Long, Mar. 10 • Ward Anderson, Scott Shields, Mar. 24 • Tim Costello, Stu McCallister, Mar. 31

Theatre Cedar Rapids

4444 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids

www.theatreocr.org

The Producers, through Mar. 14

The University of Iowa Dance

Space/Place Theatre, North Hall

www.uiowa.edu/artsiowa

Dancers in Company, Mar. 5-7

The University of Iowa Theatre

Main Theatre Building, UI Campus

www.uiowa.edu/~theatre

Check website for showtimes

Eurydice, Mar. 4-13

U.S. Cellular Center

370 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids

www.uscellularcenter.com

Cirque de Soleil, Mar. 10-14 • Avenue Q, March 26-28

WORDS

The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City

www.icmill.com

Talk Art - Writers' Workshop, Mar. 10 & Apr. 8, 10pm • **Mission Creek Festival, Apr. 3:** Book Fair, 2-6pm

Prairie Lights

15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City

www.prairielightsbooks.com

All "Live from Prairie Lights" readings at 7pm unless noted

John McNally, Mar. 9 • Adam Haslett, Mar. 24 • Carol Sklenicka, Mar. 26 • Alan Bradley, Mar. 31 • **Mission Creek Festival:** Ashley Butler, Apr. 1 • Ben Hale, Stephen Kuusisto, Thomas Beller, Apr. 2

Public Space One

129 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.myspace.com/publicspaceone

The Seagull Society, Mar. 26, 8pm

University of Iowa Museum of Natural History

Macbride Hall, UI Campus

www.uiowa.edu/~nathist

Old Bones, New Opportunities: Journey Through the Tarkio Valley Sloth Project, Mar. 25, 7pm

UI School of Art

Studio Arts, 1375 Hwy 1 West

www.art.uiowa.edu

Check website for galleries and hours

Jude Tallichet and Matt Freedman, More Than Super, Mar. 11, 7:30pm

CINEMA

Bijou Theatre

IMU, UI Campus, Iowa City

www.uiowa.edu/~bijou/

Uncertainty, After School, Feb. 26-Mar. 4 • An Education, Broken Embraces, Mar. 5-11 • Bijou Oscar Party, Mar. 7, 7pm

Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.englert.org

Hollywood Live! Oscar Party, Mar. 7, 5:30pm • Naked Lunch, Mar. 14, 7pm • History Of The World Part 1, Mar. 21m, 7pm • Highlander, Mar. 28, 7pm

Iowa City Public Library

123 South Linn St. Iowa City

www.icpl.org

Establishing a Food Forest, Mar. 6, 1pm • Blue Gold: World Water Wars, Mar. 26, 7pm

University of Iowa Museum of Natural History

Macbride Hall, UI Campus

www.uiowa.edu/~nathist

Return to the Water, Mar. 7, 2pm

KIDS

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

at Hiawatha Library

www.crma.org

Doodlebugs, Shape-Shifting, Mar. 26, 10:30am

The Iowa Children's Museum

1451 Coral Ridge Ave., Coralville

www.theicm.org

Art Adventure: Totem Poles, Mar. 11 • Art Adventure: Yogurt Cup Animals, Mar. 14 Art Adventure: Bird Nest Helper, Mar. 18 • Printmaking Day Camp, Mar. 19 • Art Adventure: Paper Poppies, Mar. 25 • Family Free Night, Mar. 26 • Flower Day Celebration, Mar. 28

University of Iowa Museum of Natural History

Macbride Hall, UI Campus

www.uiowa.edu/~nathist

Night at the Museum, Mar. 19, 6-10pm • Storytime Explorers: The Mississippi River, Mar. 21, 2pm

MISC

PATV

206 Lafayette St., Iowa City

www.patv.tv

The Smartest Iowan game show Wednesdays, contestants needed, smartestowan@gmail.com Guidelines workshop, Mar. 7 2:30pm

>> LIT FROM PAGE 18

and Albert Goldbarth. *Notes From No Man's Land*, a collection of essays about America and race, won the Graywolf Press prize for nonfiction. And in her own true form, Kiki Petrosino reads in her current hometown of Iowa City, hot off nationwide (and worldwide) stops for the publication of her first collection of poems, *Fort Red Border*.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 3
THE MILL, 5PM**

Bringing together the two literary worlds of New York and Iowa City, the lit-side of Mission Creek comes to a head on Saturday, April 3, with the Literary Death Match, presented by NY's *Opium Magazine*, and Iowa City's own shrapnel-bomb of a reading series *Anthology*. This is literary judgment at its finest, featuring students from the plethora of highlight M.F.A. programs at Iowa. Bring your best, or the celebrity judges will send you packing.

So, before you sink your teeth into some Acid Mothers Temple, or cut into a side of the Meat Puppets, Mission Creek's literary offerings invite you to have a drink at The Mill, or for a glass of wine up in the Times Club in Prairie Lights, to start your nights off with the acoustics of some of the nation's acclaimed and up-and-coming authors and journals. In other words, cut your teeth, and then cut a rug. **lv**

Joe Tiefenthaler is part of the 2010 Mission Creek Festival staff. As an undergrad at The University of Iowa, he was the editor-in-chief of Earthwords and has since spent time as an editorial assistant for the Iowa Review. Currently, he serves as a program assistant for the International Writing Program.

>> ST. PADDY FROM PAGE 5

SpaghettiOs and watching a Sopranos marathon makes you Italian.

Folks getting plastered on St. Patrick's Day aren't having an authentically "Irish" experience by being drunk. When folks get plastered on St. Patrick's Day, they're really just hoping that the booze will remove enough of their inhibitions so that they'll be able to sing and dance and love and tell stories and jokes without being at all self-conscious about it—to live, if only for a few hours—how many Irish

St. Patrick's Day is really a celebration of the death of winter—even though winter may stubbornly cling to life for several weeks thereafter.

folks are able to live all year long.

Even though it's a lot like New Year's Eve in that it draws the casual drunkards out of the woodwork, I am still a fan of the holiday.

Mostly because it's a more honest excuse to drink than New Year's because there's no pretense of it being one more "last hurrah" before entering a Lenten-like period of introspection and restraint and denial and self-improvement under the guise of New Year's Resolutions. Well-intended but usually hollow promises made to yourself that are lucky to last more than a few weeks. If they're even remembered by the time you crawl out of bed the next morning.

For most folks, the "twinkle in their eye" they have while singing Oh Danny Boy at the Deadwood on St. Patrick's Day is just some Jameson that splashed into it while they were downing their sixth Car Bomb of the evening, not the genuine twinkle a lot of Irish folks authentically have, but, on St. Patrick's Day,

for those few fleeting hours, well, it's close enough.

Besides, any holiday that's celebrated by lifting a beer, making toasts and singing and dancing with strangers while driving winter out of our lives is a holiday I can get behind.

I remember how spectacularly and unseasonably warm it was in Iowa City last year on St. Patrick's Day. Dubuque Street could have given Bourbon Street a run for its money and while sitting on the bench in front of Pizza on Dubuque after body-surfing up the stairs from the Dublin Underground, I thought to myself, what an even more wonderful place Iowa City

would be if the weather were always this nice in mid-March.

I enjoyed that thought for a moment before I realized that if that were the case, we'd be so over-populated that we might as well be Tampa. There wouldn't have been a seat on the bench

in front of the pizza place (if there were even a bench there at all) and that everything that made that moment so special—the weather, the revelers, the Irish girls I had been drinking and dancing with downstairs—none of them would have been quite as enjoyable to me as they were there, at that moment, because it really wouldn't be Iowa City any more if that were the case.

An unseasonably warm day that perfectly coincided with a holiday where drinking in public is all but a required observation (more than it usually is in Iowa City, anyway) couldn't have just been a coincidence.

I think it was our reward for toughing it out through another long winter.

Or maybe God just likes St. Paddy's Day too.

I wouldn't blame him. **lv**

Yale Cohn is not Irish but he wouldn't mind if he were.

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(kinda)

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Curses, Foiled Again

- Police arrested a 17-year-old boy in College Station, Texas, for trying to pass a counterfeit \$5 bill. Officials said the bogus bill had an “overwhelming number of imperfections,” appearing to have been made by gluing two sheets of paper together with images of the front and back of a \$5 bill printed on either side. Further evidence that the bill consisted of two pieces of paper cropped and glued together was the observation that the front of the bill was longer than the back. (*The Eagle*)
- A carjacking victim told authorities in Hayward, Calif., that his attacker choked him, drove off, then returned and resumed choking him until a witness intervened. Alameda County sheriff’s investigators immediately identified Ali Kimia, 32, as the suspect when witness and victim both mentioned the tattoos on his forehead. One over his right eye reads, “Why,” and one over his left eye reads, “Try.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*)

Homeland Insecurity

- Secret Service computers work at only 60 percent capacity, according to a classified review that blamed the slow tempo on outdated systems and reliance on a computer mainframe dating to the 1980s. Although the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which oversees the Secret Service, conceded the existing hardware “is prone to failures” and the service’s “data environment is fragile and cannot sustain the tempo of current and future operational missions,” the DHS ignored an unofficial cost estimate to update the system of \$187 million, allocating only \$33 million and requesting only another \$69 million. (*ABC News*)
- Department of Homeland Security officers lost 289 firearms—handguns, M-4 rifles and shotguns—from 2006 to 2008, according to the department’s inspector general. The report blamed officers entrusted with the weapons for failing to properly secure them. One was left unsecured in an idling vehicle at a convenience store where the gun and the vehicle were stolen while the officer was inside. Other officers left their firearms at fast-food restaurants, parking lots and a bowling alley. Local law enforcement organizations recovered 15 DHS firearms from felons, gang members, criminals, drug users and teenagers. (*USA Today*)

Puzzling Evidence

Police who raided the home of South African drug lord Fadwaan “Fat” Murphy, 37, reported that while they were searching him, his strap-on penis fell off. Charged with possessing stolen property, Murphy disclosed at a bail hearing in a Cape Town magistrate’s court that he was technically a hermaphrodite named Hilary. He explained he was born with both male and female sexual organs but had surgery to remove the female parts. “I stand firm as a man, as a husband and as a father,” Murphy declared under oath, calling his condition “God’s decision.” He noted that at least he hadn’t “been born with two heads.” After Murphy’s admission, his mother said she tried to raise him as a girl, but “he wanted to wear pants.” (U.K.’s *The Times*)

Electricity Running Wild

The Australian government warned that roofs fitted with the foil insulation it recommended for its energy-saving program are electrocuting people. Officials, who ordered a nationwide safety check of tens of thousands of roofs fitted with foil insulation it offered rebates for, blamed the deaths of four electricians on the metallic foil coming into contact with electrical cables and electrifying entire attics. A preliminary audit of 400 homes found that up to a dozen might pose a danger. (*BBC News*)

Reasonable Explanation

Sheriff’s investigators in Travis County, Texas, who caught Anthony Marco Gigliotto, 17, with 150 photos of women, mostly clothed, including “a few upskirt photos,” said Gigliotto admitted taking the photos of 39 different women without their consent but explained he acted only because his high school wasn’t teaching students enough about sex. The Lake Travis Independent School District issued a prompt denial, calling the complaint about the lack of sex education “completely unfounded.” (Austin’s *KXAN-TV News*)

Arrest Resister of the Week

When two city police officers found Jack A. Seabright Jr., 23, passed out in his vehicle in Washington, Pa., they tried various ways to rouse him. When they did revive Seabright, he took a swing at one officer, who blocked the punch and ordered Seabright out of the vehicle. He refused and kicked and punched at the two officers until one Tasered him. As soon as they pulled him from the vehicle, Seabright ran off up a snow bank, only to be stopped when he slammed head first into a

steel pole, fell over and was taken into custody. (*Washington Observer-Reporter*)

Second-Amendment Follies

Michael Phillips, 32, was teaching an NRA class in Orlando, Fla., to certify citizens to carry a concealed weapon when his gun accidentally went off, shooting student Robert Frauman Jr., 50, in the foot. NRA rules forbid bringing ammunition into safety classes. The class was taking place at Summit Church, but communications director, Kristy-Lee Lawley, said the class, the first of its kind at the church, wasn’t a church-sponsored and added, “We won’t be having anything like that in our church in the future.” (*Orlando Sentinel*)

Mensa Reject of the Week

John Yarrington, 23, agreed to act as a drug informant for police in Falmouth, Mass. After making a controlled drug purchase, Yarrington received \$100 from the police and 10 minutes later was using the money to buy drugs—from the same dealer he helped set up, who was still under police surveillance. Officers arrested Yarrington and the dealer. “It’s a case of the dumb get dumber,” Detective Christopher Bartolomei said. (*Cape Cod Times*)

Slightest Provocation

- A shootout between Errol Parker Sr., 61, and Pittsburgh police began with an argument over a parking place. Police said they received a 911 call from a man complaining that Parker punched him and brandished a gun at him, then told the man to move his car from the space the man had just shoveled out so Parker could park his car there. When police arrived, they ordered Parker out of his house, but he fired two shots at them before surrendering. (*Associated Press*)
- Milwaukee police charged apartment manager Jimmie Lamar Richardson, 52, with beating one of his tenant’s to death because the tenant locked himself out of his apartment. A witness told police that Richardson went into a rage and threw tenant Richard Bohannon against a wall and down one flight of stairs, then kicked him down a second flight of stairs. (*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*)

Compiled from the nation’s press by Roland Sweet. Submit items, citing date and source, to P.O. Box 8130, Alexandria VA 22306.

ASTROLOGY FORECAST FOR MARCH 2010

FOR EVERYONE—Increasing momentum. We all know things are changing. So far, the changes have been comparatively slow to take effect. We have been able to keep track and adjust smoothly, more or less. As of now, the pace of change will increase. We'll have to change more things more quickly. A lot of it will be out of our hands. In many cases, our personal life will just have to give way. Old relationships could become more intense as we, and those close to us, make adjustments, and allowances for each other. New relationships, including romantic relationships, could easily start up. However, all new relationships - personal, professional and/or romantic - could quickly become complicated and demanding, competing with old relationships for our time and attention. We will have to make choices. Events could take on a bittersweet tone.

♈ **ARIES**—Decision. You know what's at stake. Things must change, and soon. Your input is pivotal and in many cases, your decision will be final. You have to move very carefully to avoiding stepping on toes. You are bound to surprise and upset someone, though. Many, maybe even some of your closest friends and allies, are still not ready for this. You have to go ahead anyway. But there is enough flexibility in your relationships. They will weather this change. Some bitterness could linger, but everyone will eventually adjust, forgive and forget.

♉ **TAURUS**—Between the raindrops. You sense the strain and worry as others fight to protect what is important to them during this difficult transition. Things could get emotional. You'll need to keep things moving forward, even though you know people are upset and worried. With a little effort, you can also keep your own plans on track. Your personal focus, though, will be on healing. In the past, some things in your life cost you more than you could afford to pay, emotionally and otherwise. You'll want to change those things.

♊ **GEMINI**—Hot-spot. If you were expecting to sit out the latest round of controversies, think again. You'll find yourself in the middle of it all, somehow. Whatever the issue at a given moment, tread lightly around your boss. He or she is dealing intensely with the same issues and might take what you say the wrong way. Diplomatic evasions might be your best option. Despite the tensions, or because of them, there could be the occasional romantic overtone, or undertone. If you let a flirtation turn into something serious, be prepared for complexities.

♋ **CANCER**—Realism. Financially, you'll have a surprising amount of room to maneuver, despite the economic challenges faced by key associates. Your economic initiatives will bear immediate fruit and enhance long-term prospects. However, you must be patient with employers, partners and other influential figures who are struggling mightily with tough issues that affect everyone, including you. There's also a lot of garden variety confusion over what is to be done. A disciplined, patient approach is best. Efforts to resolve financial problems could stimulate romantic involvements and/or add complexity to existing relationships.

♌ **LEO**—Charisma. You have an almost uncanny ability to make progress where others find obstacles and get answers when others are stymied. And while worry and struggle wear others down, the stuff going on just seems to enhance your personal appeal. Your seemingly magical ability to cope in these tough times adds to your charisma. That could easily attract romantic overtures. But new romantic ties could bring unforeseen responsibilities that you might find overwhelming. Try to remain romantically detached. Help others tap the power of new ideas in addressing their challenges.

♍ **VIRGO**—End run. Avenues that seem blocked early in March will begin to open up by the end of the month. Progress could still be slow, however, and discussions lengthy. Your bargaining position is not as strong as you might hope and conditions on the ground are very complex. Fortunately, certain powerful figures are sympathetic to your cause and seem willing to lend a hand, although you might need to work through intermediaries. This will allow you to stay in the running while the really big issues get sorted out. Slowly.

♎ **LIBRA**—The generosity of others. You don't have much room to maneuver. Others do, but there's a lot of confusion about which way to go - and a lot of the so-called options are unrealistic. You can benefit others, and increase their generosity toward you, by helping them sort through the possibilities in a realistic way. In the process, you can further your own goals and perhaps increase your income. In the immediate future, your well-being will depend increasingly on cooperation with others. Conditions on the job will continue to improve.


♏ **SCORPIO**—The big picture. You have a broad understanding of events. You have friends on all sides of the issues. To win, you need everyone to come out ahead. You have to keep working at it until everybody feels the same way, and you have just enough influence to make that happen. Benevolent planetary influences are affecting your social life generally and your relations with youngsters in particular. Financial pressures will ease, too. A personal interest in unusual phenomena or unconventional ideas will soon attract the interest and support of others.

♐ **SAGITTARIUS**—Outreach. Tighter finances are leading to changed expectations. Family, friends and community are also being affected. It will take extensive and repeated discussions to get to the bottom of all this. Participation in social events will help everyone manage needed changes. Renew and strengthen vital personal ties with family, friends and neighbors. Personal alliances will help you make the adjustments required by new circumstances. Your mind is becoming a fertile source of new and sometimes unconventional ideas. A new romantic attachment is possible. It would dramatically expand your personal horizons.

♑ **CAPRICORN**—New foundations. This is just the beginning of a long cycle of change in many areas of your life, personal and professional. The powers that be are laying the groundwork for a whole new way of doing things. They are changing the basic rules of the game and that is always a slow, painstaking process with lots of unintended consequences. New, unconventional and innovative ideas will soon become the norm. It could put a strain on important relationships. You'll need to be especially careful to keep family, friends and other loved ones updated.

♒ **AQUARIUS**—Breakout. Aquarians are preparing for a big transition. Slow and gradual, at first, it will eventually pick up speed. It will get fully under way during the next year or so. For many years, now, privacy, often deep solitude, has been your preference. That is ending. You will re-emerge into the life of your community as a source of new ideas and an active agent for change. You can expect abundant support during this dramatic shift. In fact, it corresponds with a new cycle of personal growth, professional expansion and prosperity.

♓ **PISCES**—Due date. You've enjoyed a great deal of freedom and independence in recent years. For the most part, everyone in your life has gone along, or let you go your own way. However, during that time, you've quietly incurred some obligations. It will soon be time to start fulfilling those obligations. The rapidly changing world around you is about to start making demands that you must meet, too. Socially, as well as romantically, possibilities are also emerging. There must be room for your your new responsibilities in any new relationships.




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